



July 2003
Volume 11, Issue 2

FLEET FORUM

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
SOUTHEAST SUNBELT REGION

Reducing Fleet Costs

Under the current economic pressures, it is challenging to find ways to reduce vehicle fleet costs. Our largest expenses are purchasing vehicles, fuel, and maintenance and repair costs. However, the significant increase in the cost of fuel during the last year has made it difficult to keep our costs low.

During the past several months you may have noticed the emphasis we've placed on reducing maintenance or repair expenses. Your GSA Fleet Representative has probably visited or called you to discuss ways you can help us keep our costs as low as possible. Reducing costs has a positive effect on keeping your rates low.

Some of the areas you can directly help to reduce costs are:

- Ask vendors to repair only what needs fixing - no up selling please.
- Use dealerships only for warranty repairs.
- Consider turning in vehicles with very low utilization. Share vehicles between several drivers.



- Reduce frequency of car washes - use discounted washes with gas fill up when available.
- Watch out for up selling when you have preventative maintenance done. (Wiper blades, air filters, transmission service, fuel system cleaning are not normally needed.) Change oil only when GSA notification arrives.
- Report mileage accurately.
- Reduce vehicle size when ordering replacements (SUV's often can be replaced with smaller vehicles).

- Order 4x2's instead of 4x4 when no off road driving is involved.
- Order vehicles with standard equipment (stay away from options not essential to perform your mission.
- Keep tires properly inflated - and rotate them, but decline balancing unless you're having vibration.
- Look at invoices when signing to confirm charges are accurate.

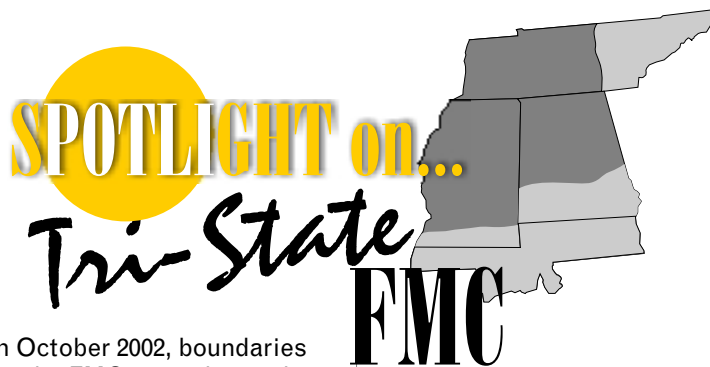
Welcome to the latest edition of the Southeast Sunbelt Region's Fleet Forum. It is designed to provide information on upcoming events and items of interest to GSA Fleet customers.

Inside This Issue...

Spotlight on Tri-State FMC	2
Move Over!	3
GSA Fleet Provides Vehicle Information To Law Enforcement	3
Credit Card Fraud Arrests	4
Upcoming GSA Vehicle Auctions	5
New Fleet Employees	5
Summer Heat and Driving Tips	6
MCC/AMC Corner	7
Phone Number Changes	8
Fuel & Water: Selecting the Right Container	9

FLEET FORUM

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
SOUTHEAST SUNBELT REGION



The Tri-State Fleet Management Center was established on November 30, 1954 in Nashville, Tennessee with five employees and a fleet of 274 Government owned or leased vehicles. Since then, we have grown to over 5400 vehicles through consolidations of numerous Executive Agencies and military fleets at Milan Army Ammunition Plant, Meridian Navy Air Station, Meridian Navy Exchange, Corps of Engineers, Columbus Air Base, Millington Navy Base, and the Anniston Army Depot.

In October 2002, boundaries for the FMC were changed and it was renamed the Tri-State FMC. We are proud to be one of seven Fleet Management Centers in the Southeast-Sunbelt Region, the largest vehicle fleet in the nation. The Tri-State FMC supports over 450 customers and is located in Murfreesboro, TN with Fleet Offices in Millington, TN, Jackson, MS and Anniston, AL.

Today, the FMC has ten permanent employees with 156 years combined transportation experience. The Tri-State Team is ready to serve and provide professional transportation support to our customers.

Richard Byrd
Fleet Manager
16 years Transportation Experience

Eileen Jacobi
Sr. Fleet Service Rep
18 years Transportation Experience

Jan Carmichael
Management Support Specialist
14 years Transportation Experience

Chuck Wood
Fleet Service Rep
3 years Transportation Experience

Larry Hatley
Sr. Fleet Service Rep
32 years Transportation Experience

Bo Holder
Fleet Service Rep
26 years Transportation Experience

Rick Ingram
Fleet Service Rep
5 years Transportation Experience

David Grantham
Fleet Service Rep
24 years Transportation Experience

Tabitha Schroeder
Fleet Service Rep
5 years Transportation Experience

Warren Askew
Fleet Service Rep
13 years Transportation Experience



*Tri-State FMC
Richard Byrd, Jan Carmichael, Eileen Jacobi, Chuck Wood*



*Millington Fleet Office
Larry Hatley and Bo Holder*



*Jackson Fleet Office
Rick Ingram and David Grantham*



*Anniston Fleet Office
Warren Askew and Tabitha Schroeder*

Please share this newsletter with your co-workers.

Move Over!

Many states have recently passed a new "Move Over Act." This new law is designed to protect emergency service workers on the highways. In Florida alone, during the 5-year period ending in 1996, 2000 motorists crashed into working law enforcement vehicles that were stopped or parked along Florida roadways 1,793 times, resulting in 5 deaths and 419 injuries.

In 2002 and 2003, 24 states passed "move over" laws. Three states currently have "move over" laws pending.

The "move over" law in each state requires motorists to steer clear when passing parked emergency vehicles that have their emergency lights on.

On a four-lane highway the



law requires the driver to move their vehicle to a lane not adjacent to the emergency vehicle.

On a two-lane road the law requires the driver to reduce the vehicle speed and travel at the reduced speed until completely past the emergency vehicle.

The specifics of each states' laws vary greatly when it comes to the amount of speed reduction required when passing a parked emergency vehicle on a two-lane roadway. For example, in

Florida a driver "shall slow to a speed that is 20 miles per hour less than the posted speed limit when the posted speed limit is 25 miles per hour or greater; or travel at 5 miles per hour. In North Carolina, the driver must "slow the vehicle, maintaining a safe speed for traffic conditions, and operate the vehicle at a reduced speed until completely past the authorized emergency vehicle."

There are many sites on the Internet containing more information on the specifics of the "move over" law in each state, or for more information you can always check with the highway patrol. You would be wise to check out the requirements before you hit the road for summer vacation, as violations of the law, will result in a fine anywhere from \$60 and 3-points on your driver's license to as much as \$500 and up to 90 days in jail. 🔑

GSA Fleet Provides Vehicle Information to Law Enforcement

An agreement between GSA Fleet and the National Law Enforcement Telecommunication System (NLETS) has made the quest for tighter homeland security easier. On March 31, 2003 GSA Fleet launched a project to share

real-time, detailed data on its fleet of nearly 190,000 vehicles to the national law enforcement community. Previously, there was no way for officers to electronically access GSA Fleet vehicle data or that of any other federal agency. GSA Fleet is the first to offer such access

by installing a direct data connection with NLETS. This effort allows Officers in the field to quickly access GSA Fleet customer and vehicle information in order to determine whether further action is warranted. 🔑

Q&A's

If there's something wrong with my vehicle, should I stop where I am or continue?

It really depends on the nature of your problem. As a safe rule of thumb, any change in your vehicle's steering, braking or acceleration should receive immediate attention. Pull safely to the side of the road onto a smooth, flat shoulder as far off the roadway as possible. On the other hand, with less urgent problems, such as an under-inflated tire, a slight shift in a gauge's reading or a blown fuse, it's usually okay to continue cautiously to the closest service station.

If I have to pull over, how do I do it safely?

Reduce distractions inside your vehicle by turning off the stereo and asking passengers to remain still and quiet. Gradually reduce speed and visually check off-road conditions before choosing where to pull over.

Use your turn signal and not your emergency flashers so other drivers will know you need to get over. When your emergency flashers are on, your blinkers don't work. Check for traffic and, when it's clear, move smoothly one lane at a time from the roadway to the shoulder. Avoid soft shoulders, curbs, uneven areas and curves that will prevent other drivers from seeing you. Don't jerk the wheel or swerve. That could cause your tires to "catch" on the side of the road.

Even though you are off the roadway, remain extra cautious. Vehicles on the shoulder or median are still at risk for collisions. After you've stopped, turn on your emergency flashers. 🔑

Q&A's

How do I know something is wrong with my vehicle?

Watch the instrument panel. Your instrument panel gauges indicate engine temperature, fuel and oil levels and other important information. Read your owner's manual to familiarize yourself with all the gauges. Your manual will also indicate what gauge readings are considered "normal" and which signal an emergency situation. However, your instrument panel can't tell you everything. For example, if your car suddenly pulls to one side, or if you feel a rumbling or vibration, safely pull off the roadway. You may have a flat or low tire. Keep alert. Your sense of smell, touch, sight or hearing may be the first hint that there's a problem. Pay attention to your car while driving. An odd odor, an unusual vibration, the sight of smoke or an unexpected sound can signal trouble.

How do I get out of a skid?

A lot of people hit the brakes hard when their car starts to skid. That generally makes things worse. Just take your foot off the gas and turn your steering wheel in the direction you want the front of the car to go. This helps straighten out the car and often regains traction. Frequently it takes more than one turn of the steering wheel to correct a skid. 🔑



Reminder...

When using your Fleet Services Card, you are not allowed to receive any cash back.

Credit Card Fraud Arrests

GSA OIG Office of Investigations announced significant arrests and judicial actions on fraudulent activity on GSA Fleet credit cards.

1. During February 2003, in Superior Court, State of Georgia, Columbus, GA, the suspect pled guilty to state charges of theft by taking (Felony). He was sentenced to two years imprisonment, one year of probation, and ordered to pay restitution to the U.S. Government in the amount of \$2106. He worked for a garage in Columbus and performed repairs and maintenance on GSA fleet vehicles. He made unauthorized charges to the GSA fleet card when vehicles were brought in for repairs.

A GSA vehicle was involved in an accident and was

2. towed to a shop for repairs. A review of the gas purchases for the vehicle found purchases were being made on the credit card while the vehicle was in the repair shop for lengthy repairs. On April 3, 2003 a lady in Gainesville, Florida was arrested when attempting to use the GSA Fleet credit card to purchase gasoline. The OIG determined the overall loss due to fraudulent charges was approximately \$10,000. Charges are pending.

3. Fraudulent activity on two GSA fleet credit cards by a customer at a gas station in Orlando, Florida. The OIG arrested the suspect and he confessed to using the GSA Fleet credit cards for personal use. Because he is in active duty military, all judicial action will be held in the military judicial arena.

In February 2003, GSA Fleet identified a number of GSA

4. Fleet credit cards being charged with large repetitive fuel charges. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement opened an investigation in March 2003 and learned that the Fleet cards were fraudulently being used to buy large amounts of fuel. The suspects electronically scanned credit card numbers from the Fleet cards and obtained several hundred gallons of stolen gasoline. GSA Fleet customers were unaware that their Fleet cards were being electronically scanned when they paid for their gasoline inside of a gas station convenience store. Once the fuel was purchased from the gas station, the suspects transported the gasoline to rigged containers at a remote dumpsite where it was sold at a discounted price. At this time, three suspects have been arrested and the case is in the process of being prosecuted by the Office of Statewide Prosecution. Over \$25,000 of fraudulent charges were charged to GSA Fleet cards in this operation. 🔑



The suspects electronically scanned several stolen credit card numbers, from almost every major credit card company and obtained several hundred gallons of stolen gasoline....

Upcoming GSA Vehicle Auctions

Our Fleet vehicles are auctioned to the public. With the exception of GSA, all Federal employees, their families, and friends can bid on these well-maintained, one-owner vehicles.

The seven auction facilities and auction dates are listed to the right. These are preliminary dates so be sure to check the website: <http://autoauctions.gsa.gov/> to verify that the date has not changed.

Auctions allow time beforehand for vehicle inspection. Vehicles may be started but not moved.

Bidders are advised to inspect vehicles carefully. Deficiencies when known,



will be listed in the auction catalog (provided at the auction facility) or will be announced prior to the sale starting. You must be 18 years of age to bid. There are additional provisions for warranties and refunds.

Please consult the GSA Fleet website for additional detailed information.

<http://autoauctions.gsa.gov/>

The tentative schedule for upcoming GSA vehicle auctions is as follows...

Aycock Auto Auction:
Kenly, NC
July 17, Aug 14, Sep 11

Chattanooga Auto Auction:
Chattanooga, TN
July 22, Aug 19, Sep 3

Gulf States Auto Auction:
Pensacola, FL
July 8, Aug 5, Sep 2

Louisville Auto Auction:
Clarksville, IN
July 29, Aug 26

Orlando Auto Auction:
Orlando, FL
July 26, Aug 23, Sep 20

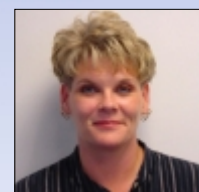
Rawls Auto Auction:
Leesville, SC
July 15, Aug 12, Sep 9

Rea Brothers' Mid-South Auction:
Jackson, MS
July 10, Aug 7, Sep 4

New Fleet Employees



Joe Marsh comes to GSA Fleet from the Air Force. He has over 20 years of logistical and transportation experience with the Air Force while on active duty. He has 12 years Fleet Management experience including setting up a new transportation operation in Bahrain shortly after the tragedy with the World Trade Centers. He joined us in May 2003 at the SC/GA Coast FMC in Charleston AFB, SC as a Management Support Specialist (MSS).

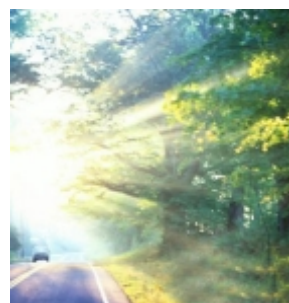


Monica Washington comes to GSA Fleet from the Department of the Air Force as a Fleet Manager of a Civil Engineer Group. She has over 15 years combined logistical and transportation experience with both Dept. of the Army and Dept of the Air Force. She joined us in March 2003 as a Management Support Specialist (MSS) at the Gulf Coast Fleet Management Center, located at Hurlburt Field, FL.

Do You Have An Alternative Fuel Vehicle and Don't Know Where to Fill It?

It's easy! Just to go to <http://www.ccities.doe.gov> and click on alternative fuels data center. This will take you to a site with an electronic map of different alternative fuel stations.

Please do not fill GSA vehicles with Premium fuel - regular unleaded fuel is sufficient!





10 Ways To Avoid Road Rage

1. Be courteous behind the wheel.
2. Don't honk your horn excessively.
3. Don't block the passing lane.
4. Don't switch lanes without signaling first.
5. Don't take up more than one parking spot.
6. Don't let your door hit the car parked next to you.
7. Don't tailgate.
8. Avoid unnecessary use of high beam headlights.
9. Don't inflict your loud music on nearby cars.
10. Allow plenty of time for every trip.

Summer Heat and Driving Tips

Please remember that special precautions are needed to help ensure safe driving when temperatures soar.

"Extreme heat is not only tough on you but it is tough on your car, and this summer's heat is causing an extraordinary number of motorists to break down," said Ed Schatzman, senior vice president of Automotive Services for AAA Auto Club South. "Careful preparation is the key to weathering summer's hottest temperatures."

To prepare your vehicle for the summer heat, motorists should practice the following tips:

Heat can be as tough on vehicle batteries as the coldest winter weather. Make sure they have the starting power to handle the stress of extreme temperatures.

Motor oil plays an important role in keeping the engine cool so check oil level and condition. If driving under extreme conditions such as



over mountains or towing a heavy trailer, switch to a motor oil with higher viscosity. Check the owner's manual for specific oil recommendations.

Check brake fluid level and condition. It is vital to maintain the proper level and that the fluid is free of contaminants to ensure reliable hot-weather braking.

Check the performance of the air conditioning system. If needed, have it serviced by a qualified technician. Do not use non-approved substitute refrigerants.

Inspect antifreeze/coolant level and condition, making certain the proper 50/50

mixture of water and coolant is present.

If your car overheats, never attempt to remove the radiator cap until the engine has cooled. Coolant in the radiator is under pressure and can flash into steam, causing severe burns.

Because temperatures inside parked cars can quickly reach dangerous levels, please consider the following advice:

Don't leave children or animals unattended in a car - not even for a short period of time.

When parked, use a sun shield to cover the windshield to minimize heat build-up and to help protect the car's interior. Cover metal and plastic parts on seat belts and child safety seats to prevent burns.

Open the vehicle's doors and let the interior cool for a few minutes before entering.

MCC Corner

What Can We Do For You?

For you, our customers, we can take the burden of your vehicle problems from you; and find fast, reliable solutions for them. We can find the best, most convenient service available in your area. We can find fast, friendly vendors, who appreciate your business, and will work hard to satisfy your vehicle's mechanical needs.

We make your tax dollars go farther. By negotiating with vendors for the lowest prices, and maintaining the highest standards of service, we leave money on the table for your agency to use for other services.

We are waiting for your call!



All you have to do is ask. Just dial 1-888-622-6344 and you will find over 60 Maintenance Controls Center Technicians and Managers nationwide ready to serve you. We want the opportunity to show you we are the right choice when it comes to your vehicle needs.

And finally, *we want to thank you!* Thank you for the loyalty you have shown us over the years. We value our partnership with you, and welcome any suggestions and ideas, which can improve our service to you. We promise you, we'll only get better. 🔑

New AMC Manager



We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new Manager of the Accident Management Center (AMC) in Ft. Gillem, GA.

Pauline Tonsil comes to GSA Fleet from Tapestry Solutions Company and Science Applications International Corporation where she served as a Military Analyst and Deployment Specialist. She retired from the Army as a Sergeant Major after 24 years of service in transportation management. She joined us in June 2003 as the AMC Manager in Fort Gillem, GA. 🔑

AMC Corner

Use of GSA Vehicle By Contractors and/or Subcontractors

Several of you have asked about accidents involving Government contract employees driving GSA Fleet vehicles. Published below are 2 subparts from the code of Federal regulations (CFR).

41 CFR Ch. 101-39.406

"The using agency will not be held responsible for damage incurred on a GSA vehicle as a result of negligent or

willful act of a party other than the agency (or the employee of that agency) to which the vehicle was assigned or issued and the identity of the party can be reasonably determined."

41 CFR Ch. 101-39.407

"When contractors or subcontractors of using agencies are in accidents involving GSA vehicles, the agency employing the contractor will usually be billed directly for all costs associated with the accident. It will be the

responsibility of the using agency to collect accident costs from the contractor, should the contractor be at fault."

If a third party can be identified, a demand letter will be forwarded to the third party establishing the Government's claim for damages. 🔑

Trivia... Motorists' Quiz...

1. When passing a large truck, allow yourself:
 - A. 15 seconds
 - B. 30 seconds
 - C. Plenty of time
2. To maintain a safe distance, motorists should follow trucks at a distance of:
 - A. At least four seconds
 - B. At least four car lengths
 - C. Two seconds
3. At an intersection, a truck immediately in front of you is signaling to make a turn. Your smartest move is to:
 - A. Go around the truck on the left
 - B. Stay put
 - C. Go around the truck on the right
4. A truck driver's blind spot:
 - A. Extends to 100 feet behind the truck
 - B. Extends to the front and back and left and right sides of the truck
 - C. Stops at the end of the truck

Answers: 1. C 2. A 3. B 4. B



Phone Number Changes

North Carolina Fleet Management Center (4FF-4)

Bldg. 2-3116, Jackson Street
PO Box 71359
Fort Bragg, NC 28307-1359

Carolyn Walton
NC Fleet Manager
(910) 436-2649

Henry Scott
Sr. FSR
(910) 436-4764

Richard Bonfanti
FSR
(910) 436-7087

William Pratt
FSR
(910) 436-7089

Teresa McLeod
MSS
(910) 436-7088

Future Counties that Require Emission Inspections In North Carolina

Effective July 1, 2003:

Catawba, Cumberland, Davidson, Iredell, Johnston and Rowan counties

Effective January 1, 2004:

Alamance, Chatham, Franklin, Lee, Lincoln, Moore, Randolph and Stanly

Effective July 1, 2004:

Buncombe, Cleveland, Granville, Harnett and Rockingham

Effective January 1, 2005:

Edgecombe, Lenoir, Nash, Pitt, Robeson, Wayne and Wilson

Effective July 1, 2005:

Burke, Caldwell, Haywood, Henderson, Rutherford, Stokes, Surry and Wilkes

Effective January 1, 2006:

Brunswick, Carteret, Craven, New Hanover and Onslow

Fuel & Water *Selecting the Right Container*

A tired soldier, up early to prepare breakfast for his fellow troops, reaches for the 5-gallon water can to make hot cereal on the M-2A burner. As he pours water into the pot the burner's flame intensifies, burning the soldier and destroying the mobile kitchen. He had mistakenly grabbed the fuel can instead of the water can.

A soldier uses a 5-gallon fuel can to refuel his vehicle with diesel fuel. Unknown to him, the fuel can was mismarked and full of MOGAS. This error causes serious engine problems and a



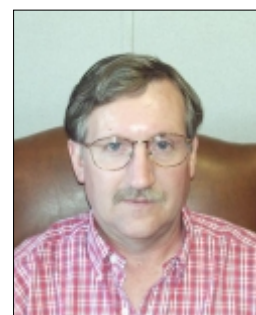
maintenance nightmare; the antifreeze oversight causes great health problems.

Mistaking a 5-gallon fuel can for a 5-gallon water can will cause serious problems, including burns

and fires. The cans need to be labeled correctly to avoid potential problems. Please use the following information to help distinguish between the two cans and label fuel cans for different fuels.

Fuel and water cans have the same dimensions. Both cans are labeled with an "X" on each side. The "X" has a circle in the middle that surrounds the identity of the liquid in the can: "WATER" for the water can and "FUEL" for the fuel can. Fuel and water cans can be the same color (tan or black) so it is not possible to identify the liquid in the can by its color. 🔑

Our Deepest Sympathy



We wish to express our heartfelt sympathy to the family, friends and associates of **Ron Shuman**. An FSR with our Ft. Knox FMC, Ron passed away on June 5, 2003 due to a sudden massive heart attack. Ron was an outstanding FSR who was always concerned with meeting his customers' needs. He had 29 years of Federal Service, and had worked for GSA Fleet since 1985. 🔑

Customer Survey

A customer phone survey of GSA Fleet will be conducted during the month of August.

Please take the time to participate in the survey

so we can better serve you in the future. We look forward to receiving your comments and appreciate your input! 🔑

